



## **Altice USA Testimony on HB 7152**

Chairman Needleman, Chairman Arconti, Ranking Member Formica, Ranking Member Ferraro, and members of the Energy and Technology Committee, Altice USA, the country's fourth largest cable, telecommunications, and broadband provider operating in 21 states through its Optimum, Suddenlink, and Altice Business brands, thanks the Committee for the opportunity to submit this testimony with respect to HB 7152, An Act Accelerating the Deployment of 5G Wireless Facilities.

***Summary: To Further Broadband Investment, the Bill Should Be Broadened to Extend to Wireline Equipment.*** Altice USA applauds Governor Lamont's commitment to furthering Connecticut's leadership on broadband connectivity and appreciates the purpose of the legislation. Given the need for both robust wireline and wireless broadband in the State, the bill should be clarified to ensure that equipment for wireline and wireless services have equal access state and municipal property for broadband infrastructure. To incentivize wireline investment and remain competitively neutral, the bill should be amended to clarify access for both wireline and wireless broadband infrastructure, and Altice USA stands ready to assist the Committee with such revisions.

***Background: Altice USA Is Investing Heavily in Broadband in Connecticut.*** As demonstrated by its various broadband initiatives in Connecticut, Altice USA shares the Committee's interest in measures that may help facilitate broadband infrastructure siting. These Company initiatives include:

- Investment in Wireline Infrastructure for High Speed Broadband: Since acquiring Cablevision in 2016, Altice USA has increased broadband speed on multiple tiers for existing customers and now offers 400 Mbps for residential customers and 450 Mbps for commercial customers, with plans for future speed increases over the existing network. Further, Altice USA is building a new fiber-to-the-home network capable of speeds up to 10 Gbps to ensure its network is capable to meeting residential and commercial customers' needs for years to come. The Company has worked collaboratively with the State and municipalities on the project but has encountered isolated instances of delays in the siting of cable equipment authorized by its state certificate and which are necessary for the FTTH network.



- Wireless and Mobile Broadband Services: Altice USA is an industry leader in WiFi deployment, resulting in Altice customers being able to access wireless broadband services in and out of the home. Later this year, the Company will launch its mobile product, providing customers with a new alternative for mobile voice and data services. Altice USA is investing heavily to build its mobile core infrastructure, using Sprint's network for connectivity. Using this facilities-based approach, Altice USA will be able to introduce new product features and aggressively price its product, creating a true competitive alternative for customers.

***The Current Draft Bill Should Be Clarified to Ensure Parity Between Broadband Services:*** As currently drafted under HB 7152, wireless companies would be afforded access to certain state property, including buildings and the right of way, pursuant to a newly created review process overseen by the Council. The bill also directs certain state agencies to work with municipalities on possible procedures to place wireless equipment on municipal property. The provisions are designed to streamline the process of siting wireless equipment on state property and possibly municipal property. The provisions of this bill should be clarified to include both wireline and wireless broadband equipment to ensure that Connecticut customers get the benefit of the most robust broadband service, both wireless and wireline.

Altice USA respectfully submits that the benefits and opportunities afforded to the wireless companies under HB 7152 be extended to other broadband infrastructure, including equipment deployed by video franchise certificate holders such as Altice. To that end, Altice USA respectfully requests that the Committee include the Company in discussions concerning an amendment to expand the legislation to include cable system deployment. Altice USA would be able to assist in developing the language necessary.

Thank you for your consideration.